

Ms. April Demers, Monroe County Substance Abuse Coalition

Medication-assisted recovery using Suboxone has been both successful and challenging in treating opiate/opioid addiction in our State. As an opiate/opioid antagonist, Suboxone blocks the effects of heroin and prescription pain pills to the brain and also helps to eliminate cravings. When combined with cognitive behavioral therapy and other recovery supports, Suboxone treatment has proven to be effective.

Suboxone has the potential for abuse and diversion when used outside of these treatment guidelines because it can be used to mask withdrawal symptoms between fixes for someone currently abusing.

Both Suboxone (opiate/opioid antagonist) and Methadone (opioid medication that is gradually titrated) are useful in medication assisted treatment of opiate/opioid addiction. While sometimes viewed as controversial, if used within the treatment guidelines, it has proven to be a successful treatment modality and it also provides a significant reduction in harm for a patient that suffers from withdrawal and relapse tendencies.

Suboxone is especially helpful in treating opiate/opioid addiction in the prenatal population, which is on the rise in Michigan.